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source in the reported lake,* the discovery of which, and the determination of its position, are the first objects of my journey; and secondly, the Adjomba and other tribes inhabiting the region which I shall traverse for a considerable distance, and during a considerable portion of the time occupied by my journey, speak the Mpongwe language, thus rendering me quite independent of interpreters; a matter of no little importance in visiting for the first time a totally unknown country.

"The supplies I take with me will, I trust, enable me to remain at least a year in the interior; and I shall use every exertion to reach the lake, and travel over as great an extent of country as possible. I cannot presume to say what will be the distance I may be able to penetrate; but, if not so fully successful as I hope to be, I shall not be discouraged from making a second attempt with larger means.

"I am compelled to take more people with me than I originally contemplated, as I shall have not less than forty loads on leaving this; but as the coast people are more likely to prove a hindrance than otherwise, I shall send all but some eight or ten back from the Adjomba country, where I hope to obtain fresh carriers at a cheaper rate. Amongst the number of those who will accompany me during the whole of my journey is one pretty well practised in the preservation of objects of Natural History, so that I hope to be able to accomplish something in that branch of science.

"I am sorry to say that the aneroid having been injured accidentally, I had to send it to England to be repaired; I fully hope, however, that it will come out by this month's mail in time for me to receive it ere commencing my journey.

"Communication with the coast will, I fear, be impossible; but should an opportunity present itself, I shall not fail to give you information of my proceedings.

"R. B. N. WALKER, F.R.G.S."

3. *Journey into the Interior of Australia, North-West of the Great Bight.* By Mr. E. A. DELISSER.

(Communicated by Dr. F. MUELLER, F.R.G.S., Melbourne.)

"Melbourne, Dec. 16th, 1865.

"At your request I have the pleasure to forward you a short account of my late trip beyond the Great Australian Bight.

"The expedition which left Melbourne in January, 1865, under my command, had a double object to effect—to explore the country inland from the Bight, and to sink for fresh water on some claims taken by Messrs. Degraives & Co. near to Fowler's Bay and the head of the Bight. I started early in the year for the purpose of taking advantage of the earliest rains, but there was none until the first week in April; and although from that time until the first week of October we had sufficient rain along the coast, it did not penetrate into the interior beyond an average distance of 30 miles; but I don't think that this country suffered more than other parts of the continent from drought this year. While waiting for a general fall, I had wells sunk along the coast between Wahganyab and the Bight, and got good water at Coyembrā in some sand-hills on the coast within 18 miles from the Bight; thus making the journey between Fowler's Bay and the head of the Bight comparatively easy for packing up the provisions.

* This lake, reported by the natives to lie in the interior, east of the Gaboon, is estimated by Mr. Walker to be about 500 miles distant from the coast, and he thinks it likely a chain of lakes exists in this direction. A native had informed him that he had visited a lake, distant three months' journey from the head of the Gaboon, and so vast that the opposite shores were not visible. The discovery of these large sheets of water is the main object of Mr. Walker's expedition.—[Ed.]

Having waited until June, I determined to take Mr. Hardwicke, one of the party, with me, and to lead out three pack-horses, as far as they would go, in the event of being unsuccessful in finding water, and to return without them on our tracks, hiding water and flour at alternate camps going out.

"Leaving one man in charge of provisions and remaining horses at the Bight, I started with Mr. Hardwicke, on the 23rd of June, from a small limestone-hole named *Kūtnā*,* which I had found in 1862, and to which place I had packed out a few gallons of water. From here I went a course about N. 60° W. until the 29th June, when, having entered scrubby country the evening before, I turned north to get over some small hills covered with timber,—myall, sandalwood and *Shegaks*. The next day, the horses not being able to go further, and having exhausted our stock of water, we were compelled to retrace our steps the whole distance we had traversed, without finding any surface-water.

"The chief feature of the country passed over is the immense plain, which I have called the Nūllarbor Plain from its being destitute of any trees, and which, commencing a few miles from the coast, extends such a long distance that we went 150 miles from the head of the Bight before we entered a dissimilar country. This plain, within 40 miles from the coast, is in general well covered with the salt-bushes, *Atriplex* and *Kochia sedifolia*, which grew from 1 foot to 2 feet high, and in places is well grassed; the ground is undulating, and the higher portions generally covered with *Eremophila scoparia*. Throughout the whole plain basins, like clay-pans, from a few feet to 2 or 3 acres, occur, in which, within 60 miles of the coast, samphire grows, but after 100 miles on our tracks they were thickly covered with small trees, *Grevillea* and *Pittosporum phylliroides*.

"The rock immediately under the surface is limestone, and throughout a large portion of the country we met numerous caves, the air from which at daytime, especially in hot weather, issues forth with great force; the noise from one of them was so loud that we could hear it 200 yards away, and, at the entrance, the blast took our hats off. We remarked that at night the current of air sets into the caves. From their number I should judge that this portion of the country is composed of blocks of limestone enclosing large vacant places. No doubt there is water in some of these caves, but in the few we examined the numerous fissures prevented us from reaching the lowest levels. The appearance of the small basins clothed with timber have a pleasing effect; the trees often cannot be discerned until quite close to the basins, in others they considerably relieve the monotony of the plain. The soil from the commencement of these basins appears gradually to improve, saltbush (*atriplex*) gives place to *Kochia sedifolia*, and the grass becomes thicker and greener, the proximity of timber most probably being the cause. The soil on the timbered hills is a very red sand, and wherever there were any open patches the grass looked well; a few feet below we found limestone. The *Shegaks* were as fine as any I have seen in South Australia; and I believe, from the number of kangaroos, parrots, and remains of natives' fires, we were not far from water when we were obliged to return. The latitude of 'Peelunibee' was taken by observation, but that of the termination of our trip is by calculation, as, in consequence of the almost certainty of having to leave extras behind, I did not take my sextant out.

"E. A. DELISSER.

"I have not yet received the information promised me by Mr. Selwyn, to whom I gave the few fossils I carried away, but the whole country is a tertiary limestone formation.

"Granite was found about 30 feet at a well 2 miles from Pindubba, or about 14' N.N.E. of Fowler's Bay."

* *Kūtnā* is about 40' N.W. of Yeer Cumben Cowie, at the head of the Bight.